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UNITED NATIONS REFORM: MEASURES AND PROPOSALS

Letter dated 23 September 1997 from the Permanent Representative of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chairman of the South Pacific Forum members of the United Nations I have the honour to transmit to you the communiqué of the twenty-eighth South Pacific Forum, held at Rarotonga, Cook Islands, from 17 to 19 September 1997 (see annex).

Our group of countries would be most appreciative if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda items 9, 14, 20 (a), 21, 24, 39 (a), (b) and (c), 41, 46, 54, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 65 (a) and (b), 69, 71 (a), (b), (c), (d), (h), (i), (j), (m), (o) and (p), 72 (b), 81, 84, 92, 95 (a) and (b), 96 (b) and (c), 97 (a), (b), (f), (g), (h) and (i), 98 (a), (c), (d), (e), (f) and (g), 99 (a) and (b), 102, 103, 104, 111, 156 and 157.

(Signed) Laurence N. EDWARDS
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Communiqué of the twenty-eighth South Pacific Forum, held at Rarotonga, Cook Islands, from 17 to 19 September 1997

1. The twenty-eighth South Pacific Forum was held at Rarotonga from 17 to 19 September 1997 and was attended by Heads of State and Government and representatives of Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The Forum Retreat was held on the island of Aitutaki.

2. The Forum thanked the Government and people of the Cook Islands for their warm welcome and the generous hospitality provided to all delegations to the Forum and for the arrangements made for its meeting.

3. The Forum expressed its deep regret over the untimely passing of the late Chairman of the Forum, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, President Amata Kabua, and paid tribute to his memory. Leaders thanked the Republic of the Marshall Islands for its continued leadership during the period of its chairmanship.

Reform, human values and togetherness

4. Leaders thanked the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands for his presentation on the Forum theme of reform, human values and togetherness and discussed how reforms aimed at achieving sustainable development should go beyond conventional economic dimensions to embrace the essentially holistic nature of the process, and took cognizance of the need for Pacific cultural values and norms to be the basic premise and foundation of this process and the work of regional institutions.

Economic Ministers Meeting

5. The Forum applauded the outcomes of the first Forum Economic Ministers Meeting, which was held at Cairns, Australia, on 11 July 1997, and thanked Australia for hosting the meeting. Leaders agreed that the implementation of the action plan would require strong commitment by all members to create a policy environment to encourage private-sector development and enhance the competitiveness of their economies. This should include the development of tourism, particularly in the Forum island countries with limited or no exploitable resources, noting the potential of the coming millennium to tourism development in the region.

6. Leaders acknowledge the importance of public accountability to economic development and agreed to implement legislation, supported by administrative measures, to counteract undesirable financial activities in the region, noting that such activities undermined development. Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to free and open trade amongst the Forum island countries through tariff reform and to ensuring investment transparency. They confirmed their support for the creation of a free trade area amongst Pacific island nations.

They agreed to cooperate closely, particularly at the subregional level, in improving air and shipping services and in addressing other impediments to increased trade and investment.

7. The Forum directed the Forum secretariat to accord high priority to facilitating the implementation of Forum Economic Ministers Meeting outcomes and requested the next meeting to report to the Forum in 1998 on progress in the implementation of the action plan.

8. Leaders recognized the special circumstances of smaller Forum countries in the implementation of economic reforms and noted that the action plan had also addressed this.

Trade office issues

9. Leaders welcomed the opening of the Pacific Islands Centre in Japan in October 1996 and requested the Government of Japan to consider providing further project funding to the Centre to allow it to develop its role after its first formative year.

10. The Forum supported the establishment of the proposed trade office in the People's Republic of China and welcomed the offer by China to contribute funding for the office. The Forum noted that for the trade office to be worthwhile and effective, substantial additional resources needed to be identified and noted that plans to open this office could not be advanced until sufficient funding could be found.

Future trade and aid relations between the European Union and the Pacific States members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group

11. The Forum noted that the Lôme Convention has been invaluable for its Pacific ACP members (Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu) and acknowledged its appreciation to the European Union and its member States for their substantial contribution to the development of the region. It endorsed the outcomes from the Pacific ACP Ministers Meeting, held at Suva in July 1997, including the proposed strategies for renegotiating the Lôme Convention. The Forum welcomed the decision by Pacific ACP Ministers to support the expansion of ACP to include other Pacific island countries.

12. Leaders welcomed the recent presentation by the Prime Minister of the Bahamas, Rt. Hon. Hubert Ingraham, and welcomed the expression of interest on the part of the Caribbean ACP countries to cooperate with Forum countries in the negotiation of post-Lôme arrangements. The Forum expressed keen interest in working closely with Caribbean and African ACP States in the forthcoming negotiations.

Second Multilateral High Level Conference on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific

13. Leaders welcomed the successful outcome of the Second Multilateral High Level Conference on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish

Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific, held at Majuro in June 1997, and the Majuro Declaration that was adopted unanimously at the Conference. Leaders thanked the Republic of the Marshall Islands for successfully hosting the Conference.

14. The Forum endorsed the convening of the inter-sessional working groups on fisheries management and monitoring, control and surveillance and a Third Multilateral High Level Conference before the 1998 Forum.

15. The Forum called upon developed States to honour their obligations and commitments to provide financial assistance to facilitate the participation of Pacific island countries at future inter-sessional working group meetings and Multilateral High Level Conferences.

Vessel monitoring system

16. The Forum endorsed the concept of a vessel monitoring system for the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) member countries, which will be progressively tested and implemented, for the Distant Water Fishing Nations vessels operating in the exclusive economic zones of FFA member countries, according to each member's wish. Leaders called upon the Distant Water Fishing Nations operating in the region to support the vessel monitoring system initiative of FFA member countries.

International water programme

17. Leaders endorsed the strategic action programme for International Waters of the Pacific prepared by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and commended the projects under the programme to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council.

Climate change

18. Leaders adopted a statement on climate change which is attached as annex 1.

United Nations special session of the General Assembly on environment and sustainable development

19. Leaders welcomed the results of the review undertaken by the special session of the General Assembly and in particular, the outcomes relating to the sustainable development of oceans, the major mainstay of their countries. They commended the success of the collaborative efforts by members, in particular the missions of the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission in New York, SPREP and the Forum secretariat, which drew attention to the need to recognize the special characteristics and needs of the small island countries.

20. The Forum noted that the special session of the General Assembly in 1999 will focus on small island developing States and urged all its members to seek to obtain positive results from the special session on selected regional objectives which are realistic and achievable. As a first step in preparation for this, Leaders tasked the Forum secretariat to develop a draft statement of objectives and strategies for furthering these objectives, based on existing

mandates and in consultation with SPREP, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission missions in New York, other regional organizations, the Alliance of Small Island States, United Nations agencies and other development oriented bodies.

21. Leaders called upon dialogue partners to support the implementation of the 1997 special session of the General Assembly outcomes of particular importance to members in the areas of oceans and seas, sustainable tourism, natural disaster management, fresh water and sustainable forest management, as well as the region's preparations for the review of the Barbados Plan of Action in 1999.

Regional security cooperation

22. To strengthen further the region's security environment, Leaders adopted and issued the Aitutaki Declaration on Regional Security Cooperation (annex 2). Leaders directed the Forum Officials Committee to report progress on the implementation of the operative provisions of the Declaration to the next Forum.

23. The Forum endorsed the continued role of the Forum Regional Security Committee in overseeing the effective coordination of regional law enforcement amongst specialist agencies, while at the same time providing for a mechanism for urgent regional consultations. The Committee's role is to be strengthened and broadened to include a second session at its normal annual meeting for consultations on broader security policy issues. Leaders endorsed the Committee's oversight role in the continued development of a common approach to weapons control.

24. The Forum noted the lack of progress in the implementation of the Honiara Declaration on Law Enforcement Cooperation, and the grave concerns expressed by Forum Economic Ministers over the potential for undesirable financial activities to undermine economic development. In this context, Forum Leaders agreed to implement their commitments under the Honiara Declaration without further delay, in order to ensure that a regional legislative framework is in place by the year 2000. Leaders, however, acknowledged the limited capacity of some member States to meet the provisions of the Honiara Declaration.

New Caledonia

25. The Forum endorsed the recommendations of a report presented by its Ministerial Committee on New Caledonia. It expressed its appreciation to the members of the Committee, and to the Government of France and the authorities in New Caledonia for facilitating the Ministers' visit to the territory.

26. Leaders were pleased that all parties to the Matignon Accords appeared generally satisfied with the progress being made in implementing the provisions of the Accords. They encouraged all parties to maintain their commitment to the Matignon Accords process, including the promotion of the economic, political and social rebalancing programme. The Forum urged all parties in New Caledonia to maintain their commitment to reaching a negotiated solution, as a successor arrangement to the 1988 Matignon Accords, that takes into account the wishes of all the communities, including concerns on the changing demographic composition of New Caledonia.

27. The Forum reaffirmed its support for continuing contact with all communities in New Caledonia as a constructive contribution towards this negotiated successor arrangement and reiterated its recognition of the rights of the people of New Caledonia to self-determination. The Forum agreed that the Ministerial Committee continue to monitor the situation until such time as a durable solution is found in New Caledonia.

South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty

28. Leaders warmly welcomed the ratification of the Protocols to the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga) by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland today in Rarotonga and called upon the United States of America to ratify the Protocols to the Treaty at the earliest possible opportunity.

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

29. The Forum Leaders warmly welcomed the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the General Assembly on 10 September 1996, and its opening for signature. Forum Leaders congratulated Forum members, which have been amongst the first countries to ratify the Treaty, and urged all nations to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible to facilitate its earliest entry into force.

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

30. Forum Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, the cornerstone of which is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They welcomed the fact that, with total Treaty membership having grown to 186 countries, the goal of Treaty universality was drawing closer and noted the constructive start in New York during the first Preparatory Committee meeting in April 1997, of the strengthened Treaty review process.

31. Leaders endorsed the general approach that the region's focus in the Preparatory Committee meetings in the lead-up to the 2000 Review Conference be on nuclear weapon free zones and cooperation between nuclear-weapon-free zones in the southern hemisphere in particular, and the transport of radioactive materials through the region. The Forum agreed to work in close consultation with other States and organizations with a common position.

Radioactive waste shipments and accident liability

32. The Forum agreed that shipments of plutonium and radioactive wastes through the region posed a continuing concern and agreed to adopt a consistent position on the issue, taking into account the risks of an accident occurring and the consequences of such an accident. It reiterated the expectation that such shipments should be carried out in a manner that addressed all possible contingencies and the concerns of relevant countries. The Forum expected that shipments would be made only if the cargo is of demonstrably minimal risk, ships are of the highest standard and shipping States agree to promote the safety of the material and provide compensation for any industries harmed as a result of

changes in the market value of the region's fisheries and tourism products in the event of an accident.

33. In this regard, the Forum noted the efforts of Japan, France and the United Kingdom in providing information about the recent shipment of high-level wastes and expressed the hope that this would be continued.

34. The Forum noted the adoption of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage, and in particular, its provisions for a dedicated transboundary fund for the victims of transboundary damage and giving coastal States jurisdiction over actions concerning nuclear damage in their exclusive economic zones.

Contamination in the Republic of the Marshall Islands

35. The Forum recognized the special circumstances pertaining to the continued presence of radioactive contaminants in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and reaffirmed the existence of a special responsibility by the United States towards the people of the Marshall Islands who have been, and are continuing to be, adversely affected as a direct result of nuclear weapons tests conducted by the United States of America during its administration of the islands under the United Nations Trusteeship mandate.

36. The Forum again called upon the United States to live up to its full obligations on the provision of adequate and fair compensation and the commitment to its responsibility for the safe resettlement of displaced populations, including the full and final restoration to economic productivity of all affected areas.

Nuclear waste storage

37. The Forum reiterated its concerns that despite the long-standing regional opposition to the use of the Pacific as a dumping ground for others wastes, and the adoption of the Waigani Convention, the proposals for creating storage sites for nuclear waste on Palmyra and Wake Islands are still being discussed by private concerns. The Forum, however, was encouraged by the reaffirmed opposition to the proposal by the United States administration.

Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System

38. The Forum drew attention to the region's continuing concerns about the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System, reiterating that the facility should be permanently closed when the current programme of chemical weapons and agent destruction was completed.

Bougainville

39. The Forum noted with appreciation the valuable briefing provided by the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea on the progress made in restoring peace to Bougainville. It also noted the appreciation of the Government of Papua New Guinea for assistance provided by neighbouring countries towards the peace process, including Australia and, in particular, New Zealand, which had

facilitated the Burnham talks and was preparing for the second round of official-level talks to be held in October 1997, followed by a meeting of Leaders later in the year.

40. The Forum warmly endorsed the recent efforts made by the Government of Papua New Guinea in restoring peace to the island and expressed its readiness to assist Papua New Guinea wherever possible in its efforts to bring about a lasting and durable peace to Bougainville Province.

Anti-personnel landmines

41. Recalling the region's long-standing interest in disarmament matters, Leaders welcomed the recent international developments in the campaign to ban anti-personnel landmines. They endorsed the Ottawa process and noted the conclusion of the negotiations in Oslo of the text of a treaty banning anti-personnel landmines in preparation for the signing of such a treaty in Ottawa in December 1997. They urged all nations to work strenuously towards the promotion of an effective global ban on anti-personnel landmines in all relevant forums, including, inter alia, the United Nations, the Conference on Disarmament, regional organizations and groupings, the review conferences of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects.

Japan-Forum leaders summit

42. The Forum warmly welcomed the invitation by the Government of Japan to the summit meeting between leaders of the region and Japan to be held in Tokyo next month, and endorsed the form and broad content of the draft agenda and Declaration, for further discussion with the Government of Japan. Leaders noted that details of the agenda, including issues to be addressed in individual presentations, would be settled in discussions between members, the Forum secretariat and the Government of Japan.

43. The Forum reaffirmed the value that the region places on its relations with Japan and urged all Forum countries to be represented at the highest level.

United Nations

44. The Forum recognized the importance of the United Nations to the region and the value it places on the observer seat at the United Nations. It tasked the Forum Secretary General to identify ways of strengthening the linkages between the Forum and the United Nations.

45. Leaders particularly valued the important contribution to the region of the work of the United Nations in the areas of development and the environment, and consequently emphasized the need for a strengthened United Nations Organization, responsive to needs of the smaller countries. In this regard, the Forum expressed support for the recent package of reforms presented to the General Assembly by the United Nations Secretary-General. Leaders stated their strong hope that the United Nations membership would support the package as a whole, to ensure the continuation of a process of reform at the United Nations.

Readmission of Fiji to the Commonwealth

46. The Forum welcomed constitutional developments in Fiji and agreed to fully support the readmission of Fiji to the Commonwealth.

Mexico post-Forum dialogue application

47. Forum Leaders noted with appreciation an indication of interest by the Government of Mexico in participating in the post-Forum dialogue process as a dialogue partner. They reaffirmed the Forum's wish to strengthen relations between the Forum and other regions, including Latin America and the Caribbean. The Forum directed the Forum Officials Committee to examine the implications of expanding the dialogue further at this time, particularly taking into account the experience of this year's post-Forum dialogue.

Canada's Security Council candidature

48. The Forum commended to members for their favourable consideration Canada's Security Council candidature.

Smaller island States membership

49. The Forum approved the inclusion of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the smaller island States sub-group of the Forum.

Sport and development

50. Forum Leaders warmly welcomed Australia's support for sport in the region and its offer to underwrite the cost of sending the Olympic Torch Relay through the South Pacific Olympic member countries on its way to the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. They recognized the importance of sport in the overall development of Forum countries and agreed to the statement and resolution contained in annex 3.

51. In this regard Leaders also noted with interest the presentation by Nauru on regional Sports Pacific Network.

Pacific Islands Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Centre

52. The Forum endorsed the establishment of the Pacific Island Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Centre in Port Moresby, noted the progress made to date, and looked forward to the Centre complementing the regional role played by the Forum secretariat on APEC matters.

South Pacific Regional Environment Programme headquarters

53. The Forum recognized the importance of the work of SPREP in the area of environment, for the region. Leaders agreed to make every effort to construct a permanent headquarters for SPREP and in this connection, welcomed the generous offers by Australia and New Zealand to provide funding. The Forum agreed to raise the issue with the Government of Japan in the post-Forum dialogue. Leaders undertook to have in place full funding arrangements for the project

within a year, including commitment by members to contribute funding if necessary.

Appointment of the Secretary General

54. The Leaders agreed to appoint Mr. Noel Levi of Papua New Guinea as the Secretary General of the South Pacific Forum secretariat for a three-year term commencing in January 1998. In doing so, Forum Leaders expressed their deep appreciation to the outgoing Secretary General, Hon. Ieremia T. Tabai, for his great contribution to the development of the region during his six years in office.

Date and venue of the next meeting

55. The Forum reaffirmed its appreciation and acceptance of the kind offer of the Federated States of Micronesia to host the twenty-ninth South Pacific Forum. The date for the Forum will be finalized by the Federated States of Micronesia in consultation with the secretariat.

ANNEX 1

Forum Leaders retreat statement on climate change, 19 September 1997

1. The Forum recognized and endorsed the deep concerns regarding the impact of greenhouse gas emissions on rising sea levels and changing weather patterns on all Forum members, especially low-lying island nations, as recorded in the Statement on Climate Change and Sea Level Rise issued by the seventh Economic Summit of Smaller Island States Leaders held in Rarotonga on 12 and 13 September 1997. They urged all countries to make additional efforts in meeting commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and expressed concern at the insufficient progress made so far.

2. Leaders recognized that to respond effectively to those concerns would require the active cooperation of all countries with significant greenhouse gas emissions.

3. The Forum urged all Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change to consider fully the Alliance of Small Island States draft protocol during the ongoing negotiations. Leaders urged all participants at the forthcoming Kyoto Conference to pursue vigorously an outcome which would produce the highest level of net reduction in global greenhouse gas emissions, by means of a legally binding protocol or other legal instrument.

4. Leaders recognized that participants at the Kyoto Conference can be expected to adopt different approaches but all Forum members are unified in their support of the principles set out in this statement.

5. Leaders recognized the importance of retaining or replanting forests to mitigate the effects of emissions.

6. The Forum also called for the outcome of the third session of the Conference of the Parties to provide for procedures and future time-frames under which significant developing country emitters would limit and ultimately reduce their greenhouse gas emissions as part of global efforts towards attainment of the long-term goal of the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

7. Leaders agreed that these positions should be concertedly advocated by members and the Secretary General by means of organized representations, in the lead-up to the third session of the Conference of the Parties.

ANNEX 2

Aitutaki Declaration on Regional Security Cooperation
adopted on 18 September 1997

1. Forum Leaders recalled the 1992 Declaration on Law Enforcement Cooperation (the Honiara Declaration), which recognized that an adverse law enforcement environment could threaten the sovereignty, security and economic integrity of Forum members and jeopardize economic and social development.

2. The Forum recognized the region's vulnerability to natural disasters, environmental damage and unlawful challenges to national integrity and independence and reaffirmed its commitment to take a comprehensive, integrated and collaborative approach to maintaining and strengthening current mechanisms for cooperation among members in dealing with threats to the security, broadly defined, of States in the region and of the region as a whole.

3. Forum Leaders, recalling their commitment to existing regional and international cooperative security arrangements, accepted the need for the region to take on a more comprehensive approach to regional security consistent with the relevant principles of the United Nations 'An Agenda for Peace'.

4. The Forum noted that the most immediate risks to security in the region hinge on regional and domestic developments, including natural disasters, transnational crime including drug trafficking, and economic, social and environmental policies.

5. The Forum expressed concern about the vulnerability of member countries to external threats to their sovereignty.

6. Forum Leaders also acknowledged that security challenges could arise with little warning, and the region needs to be able to respond quickly to them.

7. The Forum recognized that coordination mechanisms enabling the region to respond to specific types of security threats are already well developed in the region through the South Pacific Forum, other regional organizations, and sub-groupings, and that unnecessary duplication, overlap and waste should be avoided.

8. Forum Leaders acknowledged that existing arrangements have not provided explicit mechanisms to facilitate consultations that would enable members to respond promptly and effectively to requests for assistance.

9. The Forum considered that the enhancement of existing mechanisms would help build confidence within the region in relation to political and security issues and agreed that dialogue on political and security issues should be broadened.

10. Forum Leaders expressed support for the following guiding principles governing security cooperation in the region:

- The Forum is committed to promoting a comprehensive, integrated and collaborative approach to security in aid of the region;

- Good governance, sustainable development and international cooperation, including preventive diplomacy, are among the most effective ways of overcoming the vulnerability, building mutual confidence and strengthening the overall security of states in the region;

- Recognizing that it is best to avert the causes of conflict, the Forum is committed to reducing, containing and resolving all conflicts by peaceful means, including by customary practices;

- Forum members will give effect to their shared commitment to peace and security by engaging in practical forms of cooperation in accordance with this Declaration and international law.

11. In line with these principles, the Forum agreed to develop further mechanisms for preventive diplomacy, including use of the Forum Regional Security Committee, the good offices of the Forum Secretary General, eminent persons, fact-finding missions and third-party mediation.

12. Forum Leaders also agreed that the Forum Regional Security Committee Meeting be strengthened through the addition of a second session for consultations on broader security issues.

13. The Forum agreed that the Forum Regional Security Committee should give early consideration to the circumstances whereby the Committee would be convened in response to emergency situations.

14. Forum Leaders agreed that procedures should be developed and put in place which would better facilitate responses by the region's disciplined forces, including early consideration of status of forces agreements for this purpose.

ANNEX 3

Forum statement and resolution on sport and development

We, the Leaders who have participated in the twenty-eighth Meeting of the South Pacific Forum, held at Rarotonga, Cook Islands, in 1997, recognize the importance of sport in the overall development of our nations. We value the benefits that lifelong sporting participation can bring, particularly to health, community cohesion and social interaction. We equally value the benefits of competitive sport, especially its role in developing national pride and providing role models for the young.

Recalling our Vision Statement issued at the twenty-sixth Meeting of the South Pacific Forum, held at Madang, Papua New Guinea, in 1995, for enhancing regional cooperation for the next twenty-five years in which indigenous and other values, traditions and customs of the region are respected and promoted through sporting exchanges, we see sport as one of the unifying forces for Forum countries and our region, encouraging friendly competition through the South Pacific Games and, for those States which are eligible, the Oceania Games, the Commonwealth Games and the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

We recognize the enormous regional opportunity presented by the Sydney 2000 Olympics and Paralympics to showcase the region through our athletes. We appreciate the generous assistance being provided by the Government of Australia under the Australia South Pacific 2000 programme to maximize regional participation in the Sydney Olympics and Paralympics, including through the regional Olympic Torch Relay, and to develop the physical education and sports administration of the region so that the Games are a springboard to the future development of sport in the region. In this context, we recognize the importance of a successful regional bid for the 2006 Commonwealth Games, which would give those eligible Forum members a further opportunity for their athletes to compete and strive for sporting international success within their own regional environment.

Accordingly, we as Forum leaders resolve to support the development of sport in the region, within our available resources, by:

- Developing a strong, vibrant commitment to physical and sports education within our school systems;

- Working closely with our National Olympic Committees and other relevant bodies, both governmental and non-governmental, to encourage broad participation in sports;

- The development of skills in sports administration, coaching and officiating; and the promotion of arrangements for recreational and competitive sport at all levels and for all ages;

- Encouraging regional sporting competitions and the sharing of information and expertise;

- Supporting the Olympic Torch Relay through every National Olympic Committee within Oceania and to work with each National Olympic Committee, the Oceania National Olympic Committee and the Sydney Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games in making this a truly unique reality for our region;

- Advocating and promoting a greater global emphasis on sport in the region through the 2000 Olympics and Paralympics, the 2006 Commonwealth Games and various sports competitions, and by urging appropriate international (support), including the Commonwealth, to give greater attention to the global benefits of sport in the context of development.